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Viewing cable 06MEXICO6546, PRD PREPARES FOR TWIN INAUGURATIONS

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06MEXICO6546	2006-11-17 23:37	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Mexico

Appears in these articles:

<http://wikileaks.jornada.com.mx/notas/eu-siguio-con-lupa-la-movilizacion-poselectoral>

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4318
INFO RUEHXC/ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 006546

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TAGS: [ECON](#) [FBI](#) [DHS](#) [PAS](#) [DAO](#) [CONS](#) [OPAD](#) [DCM](#) [POL](#) [AID](#)
SUBJECT: PRD PREPARES FOR TWIN INAUGURATIONS
REF: A. MEXICO 05318
[1](#)B. MEXICO 06278

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER-COUNSELOR CHARLES V. BARCLAY, REASONS
: 1.4 (B/D)

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) Poloff met with PRD leaders and Mexico City government (GDF) officials to discuss PRD plans for Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's (AMLO) self-styled inauguration on November 20 and for the official inauguration of President-elect Felipe Calderon on December 1. For November 20, the PRD expects an event similar to the September 16 PRD-sponsored National Democratic Convention, with GDF officials planning for a large turnout and party officials seeking to dampen expectations. With respect to Calderon's official inauguration on December 1, the PRD leadership has decided to take some form of protest action at the ceremony, although party moderates are advocating for a symbolic protest, and party radicals have vowed to physically prevent Calderon from taking the oath of office. PRD senate coordinator Navarrette told poloffs that the best resolution would be having the December 1 inauguration at a location other than the Congress, suggesting that many in his party would settle for such a symbolic victory.

The PRD prepares for AMLO's self-inauguration

[1](#)2. (C) The PRD and allied parties PT and Convergencia (a.k.a. the "United Progressive Front" or FAP), have been preparing for AMLO's self-styled inauguration, which will take place on Monday, November 20, in Mexico City's central square or Zocalo. GDF officials are planning for a turnout similar to the one achieved at the September 15, PRD-sponsored National Democratic Convention (NDC), when 200,000 people are estimated to have thronged the Zocalo (see reftel A). GDF Secretary of Government Ricardo Ruiz told us that all

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necessary security precautions were being taken to prepare for the event. At the same time, he warned that some radical groups might set up protest camps in the Zocalo again. While the GDF is planning for a major turnout, PRD federal deputy Cuauhtemoc Sandoval -- perhaps seeking to dampen expectations -- downplayed the prospects for a heavy turnout, arguing that since the end of the post-election crisis, AMLO's civil disobedience movement had lost some of its fervor.

[1](#)3. (C) Mary Carmen Soria, assistant to AMLO advisor Dr. Perez Gay, said that the November 20 event would be similar to the NDC, with some formalities, including the "swearing-in" ceremony and the presentation of AMLO's "legitimate cabinet" (see reftel B). When poloff questioned why AMLO did not

choose current PRD legislators or respected PRD heavyweights for his cabinet, party contacts gave a uniform response, noting that AMLO needed people who could work full-time on the civil resistance movement. On the other hand, Dr. Jose Fernandez Santillan, political science professor at Monterrey Tech, hypothesized that (1) either PRD heavyweights were offered positions and turned them down because they were trying to protect their political interests/reputation, or (2) AMLO, a pragmatic politician, made a conscious decision to choose those whom he could control.

PRD vows to impede Calderon's inauguration

¶4. (C) While the final logistical preparations are being made for AMLO's self-inauguration, the PRD continues to debate its next major protest action. In a November 11 meeting, the PRD's National Political Council -- the party's highest governing body -- formally decided to follow through on threats to "impede" the December 1 ceremony in which President-elect Felipe Calderon will take the oath of office in Congress' Chamber of Deputies.

¶5. (C) However, local newspaper Reforma reported that the party was divided on protest strategies. Deputies Cuauhtemoc Sandoval and Fernel Galvez said the precise nature of their protest might not be decided until a couple of hours before the event, and that the possibility remained they would adopt some form of symbolic protest short of actually seeking to

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block the event. PRD's moderates reportedly have proposed such actions as boycotting the inauguration, turning their backs as Calderon takes the oath, and/or placing black blankets on their seats, to symbolize democracy's "death" on Election Day, July 2. The party's radicals, however, are insisting on blocking the ceremony at whatever cost. They are considering installing protest camps outside the Chamber and occupying the podium days before December 1. Some PRD legislators, however, think it will be difficult to overcome the security measures planned for the event. Many doubt a repeat performance of the September 1 protest, when PRD legislators took control of the podium in advance of Fox's annual address. An element of surprise was present in the September 1 protest; this time the logistics are different and the GOM will be prepared.

An alternate location for December 1?

¶6. (C) Because of the PRD threats, some PRI legislators are suggesting that Calderon consider taking the oath of office elsewhere than in Congress, a suggestion supported by PRD officials. Sandoval, for instance, alluded to President Lyndon Johnson's swearing-in on an airplane following President Kennedy's assassination. Ignacio Maravan, a political science professor at CIDE and AMLO advisor, told poloff that Calderon would by operation of the Constitution be considered the "legal" (but not "legitimate") President on December 1 and it did not matter if or where he took the oath. In a separate meeting, PRD Senate coordinator Carlos Navarrete said that an alternate location would be the best resolution for both Calderon and the party.

¶7. (C) GDF Secretary of Government Ricardo Ruiz believes the GOM is actually considering an alternate site, even if they have not yet officially communicated this to the GDF. Ruiz said the GOM is also exploring other routes and means of access to the Chamber of Deputies. Ideology and political affiliations aside, Ruiz said the GDF was committed to providing security and avoiding blockades or disturbances outside the event. He told poloff the GDF was going to establish a working group with the GOM on November 16 to coordinate inauguration security and logistics. On the other hand, Ruiz forewarned that whatever happens inside the Chamber was not the GDF's responsibility. He also admitted

that he was not privy to PRD legislators' plans.

Comment: December 1 depends on November 20

18. (C) AMLO's self-styled inauguration could mark a major turning point for his civil resistance movement. He needs a significant turnout to regain his lost momentum and keep his campaign against Felipe Calderon from degenerating. Elements in his party already are signaling that they are prepared to negotiate with Calderon and his team, suggesting party discipline may be breaking down. In addition to a loss of support from some quarters in his party, AMLO's cause may be losing financial steam: local news sources report that AMLO has now resorted to soliciting contributions from ordinary Mexicans in order to fund his "parallel government." The tactics that the PRD chooses for Calderon's inauguration may well depend on supporter turnout and enthusiasm at its November 20 event. If turnout or enthusiasm on November 20 is lower than expected, the PRD might opt for a more moderate protest on December 1. On the other hand, if the November 20 turnout is large, party radicals may gain more influence and seek to actually prevent Calderon from taking the oath of office in Congress. In other words, the success of Monday's event may well set the stage for Calderon's inauguration.

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